

13th STCBC Meeting**Safer Transport of Children in Buses and Coaches**

Date: 22 November 2022

Time : 9h-12h CET

Location: Web-meeting (Teams)

1) Welcome & Meeting Arrangements (Chair, Marta)

Marta (Chair, Spain) welcomed everyone to the web-meeting. She explained that her aim is to review the draft Regulation, which will be submitted by Spain to the forthcoming 72nd session of GRSP (Dec. 2022) as an Informal Document under Item 20. A formal Working Document will be submitted to the 73rd session (May 2023).

2) Adoption of the agenda – STCBC-13-01

Marta apologised for not sharing an Agenda before the meeting. She explained that she planned only one Agenda item, to review the draft Regulation. No additional items were proposed.

3) Actions from last meeting

There were no specific actions, except to review the draft Regulation. No comments were received. The Minutes of the last meeting (STCBC-12-04) were adopted with no changes.

4) Drafting the new UN Regulation - STCBC-13-02 (All)Scope

Rudolf (Germany) noted that the Scope limits the draft Regulation to forward-facing vehicle seats only. He asked why rear-facing vehicle seats are excluded? Marta explained that a rear-facing child restraint built-in to a rear-facing vehicle seat would essentially be forward-facing in a front impact collision. Following a short discussion, the Group agreed in principle to widening the scope to include rear-facing vehicle seats, provided that rear-facing child restraints cannot be built-in to the seat. These changes were made in square brackets for further discussion at the next meeting.

Application for Approval

Yoshinori (Japan) highlighted some small errors in the paragraph numbering and cross-referencing. These were corrected by Marta on the screen.

Approval

Victor (Spain) noted that the form in Annex 1 (Communication) refers to the name of the Informal Group, which may not be appropriate for the regulation or for products that comply with it. The Group agreed and changed it to rear: ‘restraining devices for child occupants of buses and coaches’.

General specifications

After the Group agreed to adding rear-facing vehicle seats to the Scope (see above), the following sentence was added to paragraph 7.1.1. to exclude rear-facing child restraints from such seats: ‘A rear-facing CRS cannot be installed in a rear-facing vehicle seat’.

Tests requirements

The following items were discussed from the ‘tests requirements’ paragraph:

- Corrosion test:

Michael (OICA) noted that UN Contracting Parties might ask why we have added corrosion requirements at a component-level for built-in child restraints as they are not specified for vehicle seats. Marta explained that the Group agreed to keep the corrosion test during previous discussions. She added that corrosion test requirements are consistent between UN Regulations No. 16 (seat belts) and No. 129 (ECRS). Similar requirements are needed in this regulation for components of a built-in integral child restraint, which wouldn’t be covered elsewhere.

- Dynamic test:

Christina (United States) asked whether the UN Regulation No. 80 sled pulse is stringent enough and representative of real-world collisions. Marta replied that potential candidates for the sled pulse were reviewed during the early stages of the Informal Group. She highlighted the presentation from Salim (OICA) that informed the Group’s decision ([STCBC-04-04](#)). Victor (Spain) added that the Group also took account of the findings of a European Commission funded study to review the appropriateness of crash pulses in legislation: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/45a7cf50-a318-11eb-9585-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>.

Yoshinori highlighted some minor editorial and numbering errors. These were corrected by Marta on the screen.

General comments raised by the International Road Transport Union (IRU)

Sagar (IRU) noted that the draft Regulation focusses on technical matters relating to type-approval. However, vehicle operators would like to understand how the regulation will relate to them and how it will balance their needs with those of regulators. For example, the draft regulation doesn’t specify how many built-in child restraints must be installed in a vehicle, so it is unclear what operators should be doing to prepare. He also asked the Group to investigate the rate of bus and coach collisions and their outcomes for children.

Marta explained that these fundamental questions were addressed at the start of the Informal Group. Collision statistics from several different countries were presented to the Group at the first¹ and second² sessions. These showed low injury rates for children in buses and coaches, but also low levels of

¹ <https://wiki.unece.org/display/trans/STCBC+1st+Session>

² <https://wiki.unece.org/display/trans/STCBC+2nd+Session>

appropriate restraint use, which raises the possibility of a single incident in the future leading to high casualty rates. The UN World Forum for the Harmonisation of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29), via the Working Party on Passive Safety (GRSP) has established a clear mandate for the Informal Group to develop a new regulation to better facilitate the approval of products that are tailored to buses and coaches.

Marta explained that the Informal Group is unable to regulate the number of child restraint systems that must be provided in a bus as that falls outside the remit of vehicle type-approval. Instead, it is a matter for national authorities to decide. She added that child restraints that are approved to UN Regulation No. 129 can also be used on buses and coaches, provided there is sufficient space and appropriate attachment hardware (i.e. three-point seat belt or ISOFIX). The new regulation aims to provide a type-approval route for child restraints that are developed for buses and coaches, and in this initial version, are built-in to the vehicle seat.

Michael (OICA) agreed that it was appropriate for the Group to focus on product technical requirements. Although child injury rates are low, there is a need for a harmonised technical solution, and ideally, in the future, the market would generate demand for products that comply with the new Regulation. However, he also noted that one open item to consider is the amount of space around a small child in a built-in child restraint that is integrated in the backrest of the seat. He warned that the regulation doesn't restrict the use of the seat behind by an adult passenger. The Group agreed to consider this point further, possibly in consultation with the Working Party on General Safety (GRSG).

Rudolf added that GRSG has been clear with respect to the number of seating positions that can accommodate children and/or child restraints. The Informal Group is limited to the new Regulation and cannot amend other bus and coach type-approval regulations, such as UN Regulation No. 107. The number of seating positions for children should be dealt with through national legislation, particularly as some countries have special categories of buses for children.

Sagar asked whether the Group could hold-off on proposing the Regulation until these matters are discussed further. A short discussion followed in which several members of the Group reiterated the mandate from WP.29 and GRSP. Sagar acknowledged that the objective of the Group is clear and that a process has been followed and decisions made. He emphasised that he was simply relaying questions he received from vehicle operators and that IRU is not against the Regulation.

5) Confirmation of tasks and responsibilities

No significant tasks and responsibilities were recorded. However, the Group was asked to review the draft regulation (STCBC-13-02) before the next meeting and to take note of any open discussion points (in square brackets and/or highlighted blue, possibly with markup comments).

6) AOB

No other business was discussed.

7) Next meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for January 10, 2023, from 9.00 to 12.00 (CET).

Appendix 1 – Attendees

Marta Angles – Chair	Spain
Dinos Visvikis – Secretary	CLEPA
Daniel Kutschkin	Australia
Ronald Vroman	Consumers International
John Taylor	CPT
Rudolf Gerlach	Germany
Britta Schnottale	Germany
Sagar Singamsetty	IRU
Kotaro Nori	Japan
Yoshinori Tanaka	Japan
Kazumi Watanabe	Japan
Tomasz Lorenc-Osowski	OICA
Michael Becker	OICA
Jose Maria Martinez	Spain
Miriam Asiain Fernandez	Spain
Victor Calzadilla Garcia	Spain
Christina Echemendia	United States